

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

x

JOHNATHAN STEVENS,

Plaintiff,
-against-THE CITY OF NEW YORK, POLICE COMMISSIONER
RAYMOND KELLY, CAPTAIN KEVIN CATALINA,
POLICE OFFICER JOSEPH CAROLAN, SHIELD
#12694, JOHN DOE POLICE OFFICER #1-7.COMPLAINT AND
PETITION FOR
RELEIF

07 CV 11442

DOCKET #

ECF CASE

Defendants.

x

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

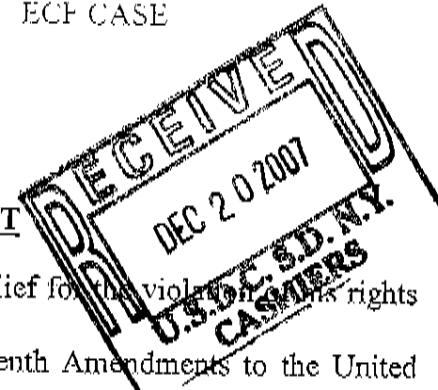
1. This is a civil rights action in which plaintiff seeks relief for the violations of plaintiff's rights secured by 42 USC §1983, §1988 and the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution, and the laws and Constitution of the State of New York.

2. The claim arises from an July 25, 2005 incident in which Officers of the New York City Police Department ("NYPD"), acting under color of state law, intentionally and willfully subjected plaintiff to, among other things, assault, battery, and excessive force.

3. Plaintiff seeks monetary damages (special, compensatory, and punitive) against defendants, as well as an award of costs and attorneys' fees, and such other and further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

JURISDICTION

4. This action is brought pursuant to 28 USC §1331, 42 USC §1983, and the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution. Pendent party jurisdiction and supplementary jurisdiction over plaintiff's state law claims are asserted.



5. The amount in controversy exceeds \$75,000.00 excluding interest and costs.
6. Venue is laid within the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York in that Defendant City of New York is located within and a substantial part of the events giving rise to the claim occurred within the boundaries of the Southern District of New York.

PARTIES

7. Plaintiff is a citizen of the United States and at all times here relevant resided in Kings County, City and State of New York.

8. The City of New York is a municipal corporation organized under the laws of the State of New York.

9. New York Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly ("Kelly") was at all times here relevant the Commissioner of the New York City Police Department, and, as such, was a policy maker with respect to training, supervision, and discipline of NYPD officers, including the other individual defendants. Kelly is sued in his individual and official capacities.

10. Commanding Officer Captain Kevin Catalina ("Catalina") was at all times here relevant the commanding officer of the Public Service Area 6, and, as such, was a policy maker with respect to training, supervision, and discipline of NYPD officers within the precinct, including the other individual defendants. Catalina is sued in his individual and official capacities.

11. All others individual defendants ("the officers") are employees of the NYPD, and are sued in their individual and official capacities.

12. At all times here mentioned defendants were acting under color of state law, to wit, under color of the statutes, ordinances, regulations, policies, customs and usages of the City and State of New York.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

13. On July 25, 2005 at approximately 3:20 A.M., in the vicinity of 155th Street and Eighth Avenue, New York, NY, plaintiff was subjected to excessive force by defendant police officers, causing serious injuries.

14. At all times during the events described above, the defendant police officers were engaged in a joint venture and formed an agreement to violate plaintiff's rights. The individual officers assisted each other in performing the various actions described and lent their physical presence and support and the authority of their office to each other during said events. They failed to intervene in the obviously illegal actions of their fellow officers against plaintiff.

15. During all of the events above described, defendants acted maliciously and with intent to injure plaintiff.

16. As a direct and proximate result of the acts of defendants, plaintiff suffered the following injuries and damages:

- a. Violation of his rights pursuant to the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution to be free from an unreasonable search and seizure of his person;
- b. Violation of his right to Due Process of Law under the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution;
- c. Violation of his New York State Constitutional rights under Article 1, Section 12 to be free from an unreasonable search and seizure;
- d. Violation of his New York State Constitutional right under Article 1, Section 6 to Due Process of Law;
- e. Physical pain and suffering;

f. Emotional trauma and suffering, including fear, embarrassment, humiliation, emotional distress, frustration, extreme inconvenience, and anxiety.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

(42 USC § 1983)

17. The above paragraphs are here incorporated by reference.
18. Defendants acted under color of law and conspired to deprive plaintiff of his civil, constitutional and statutory rights to be free from unreasonable search and seizure and to due process of law pursuant to the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution and are liable to plaintiff under 42 U.S.C. §§1983 and §§ 6 and 12 of the New York State Constitution.
19. Plaintiff has been damaged as a result of defendants' wrongful acts.

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION
(MUNICIPAL AND SUPERVISORY LIABILITY)

20. The above paragraphs are here incorporated by reference.
21. The City, Kelly, and Catalina are liable for the damages suffered by plaintiff as a result of the conduct of their employees, agents, and servants.
22. The City, Kelly, and Catalina knew or should have known of their employees', agents', or servants' propensity to engage in the illegal and wrongful acts detailed above.
23. The aforesaid event was not an isolated incident. The City, Kelly, and Catalina have been aware for some time (from lawsuits, notices of claim and complaints filed with the Civilian Complaint Review Board) that many of their police officers are insufficiently trained on how to avoid the use of excessive force during an arrest. The City, Kelly, and Catalina are further aware, from the same sources, that NYPD officers routinely assault citizens without fear of reprisal. The City, Kelly, and Catalina fail to discipline officers for not reporting fellow officers'

misconduct that they have observed, and they fail to discipline officers for making false statements to disciplinary agencies. Further, there is no procedure to notify individual officers or their supervisors of unfavorable judicial review of their conduct. Without this notification, improper force is practiced and incredible testimony goes uncorrected. Additionally, the City, Kelly, and Catalina have isolated their law department from the discipline of police officers, so that civil suits against police officers for actions taken in their capacity as police officers have no impact on the officers' careers, regardless of the outcome of the civil actions. The City, Kelly, and Catalina are aware that all of the aforementioned has resulted in violations of citizens' constitutional rights. Despite such notice, the City, Kelly and Catalina, have failed to take corrective action. This failure and these policies caused the officers in the present case to violate plaintiff's civil rights, without fear of reprisal.

24. The City, Kelly, and Catalina have failed to take the steps to discipline, train, supervise or otherwise correct the improper, illegal conduct of the individual defendants in this and in similar cases involving misconduct.

25. The above described policies and customs demonstrated a deliberate indifference on the part of policymakers of the City, Kelly, and Catalina to the constitutional rights of persons within New York City, and were the cause of the violations of plaintiff's rights here alleged.

26. Defendants the City, Kelly, and Catalina have damaged plaintiff by their failure to properly train, supervise, discipline, review, remove, or correct the illegal and improper acts of their employees, agents or servants in this and in similar cases involving police misconduct.

27. Plaintiff has been damaged as a result of the wrongful, grossly negligent and illegal acts of the City, Kelly, and Catalina.

WHEREFORE, plaintiff demands judgment against the defendants, jointly and severally, as follows:

- A. In favor of plaintiff in an amount to be determined by a jury for each of plaintiff's causes of action;
- B. Awarding plaintiff punitive damages in an amount to be determined by a jury;
- C. Awarding plaintiff reasonable attorneys' fees, costs and disbursements of this action; and
- D. Granting such other and further relief as this Court deems just and proper.

JURY DEMAND

Plaintiff demands a trial by jury.

DATED: Brooklyn, New York
December 18, 2007

TO: New York City
Corporation Counsel Office
100 Church Street, 4th floor
New York, NY 10007

Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly
1 Police Plaza
Room 1406
New York, NY 10006

Captain Kevin Catalina
PSA 6
2770 Frederick Douglas Boulevard
New York, NY 10039

Police Officer Joseph Carolan, Shield #12694
PSA 6
2770 Frederick Douglas Boulevard
New York, NY 10039

Yours, etc.,



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